

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7014
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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: UNRWA, XF, JO
SUBJECT: UNRWA MOVE OF HEADQUARTERS TO VIENNA

REF: A. BEIRUT 4101, B. AMMAN 4080

1. WE NOTED WITH INTEREST YASSER ARAFAT'S REPORTED
OPPOSITION TO UNRWA TRANSFER OF ITS HEADQUARTERS TO
GENEVA (REFTEL A). GOJ ALSO APPEARS UNWILLING TO LET
ISSUE DIE. ON JULY 19 GOJ PRIME MINISTER BADRAN RAISED
QUESTION WITH SYG'S ASSISTANT ROBERTO GUYER, AND HASSAN
IBRAHIM, MINSTATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DISCUSSED IT WITH
A VISITING FRG PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION. AMBASSADOR HASEM
NUSAYBAH, UN PERM REP, ALSO TOLD POLOFF DURING MEZVINSKY
VISIT THAT JORDAN PLANNED TO RAISE OBJECTIONS TO MOVE
OUT OF MIDDLE EAST IN UNGA POLITICAL COMMITTEE.

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2. IN ADDITION, PRESS REPORTS JULY 25 THAT AT CONFERENCE
OF ARAB COUNTRIES HOSTING REFUGEES NOW BEING HELD IN
AMMAN, SYRIA, LEBANON, EGYPT, JORDAN, THE PLO AND THE ARAB
LEAGUE ISSUED JOINT STATEMENT REAFFIRMING "OUTRIGHT
REJECTION" OF THE DECISION TO MOVE UNRWA HEWDQUARTERS TO
VIENNA AND STATING INTENTION TO RAISE THE ISSUE AT
ANNUAL UNRWA ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ADCOMM) MEETING TO BE

HELD IN AMMAN AUGUST 29. MAJOR POINTS OF STATEMENT ARE:
EFFECTIVE UNRWA WORK REQUIRES HEADQUARTERS TO BE IN ME,
EVEN IF SPLIT BETWEEN MORE THAN ONE COUNTRY IN REGION;
MOVE WILL CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR LOCAL EMPLOYEES AND THIS WOULD
AFFECT UNRWA SERVICES; COST OF TRANSFER WILL ADD TO UNRWA
DEFICIT; AND HAVING UNRWA IN VIENNA "WILL ALLOW
ORGANIZATION TO BE PRESSURED INTO ADOPTING POLICIES CON-
FLICTING WITH THE GOALS IT WAS CREATED TO ACHIEVE".
FOR THESE REASONS, STATEMENT CONCLUDES, HEADQUARTERS
SHOULD REMAIN IN ME, AND CONFERENCE CALLS ON SYG
WALDHEIM "TO KEEP HIS PROMISE TO STOP THE MOVE (SIC) AND
TO INTERVENE TO KEEP AGENCY IN ARAB WORLD".

3. THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN PRESS REPORTS HERE OF REFUGEE
PETITIONS TO GOJ TO STOP UNRWA TRANSFER, WHICH REFUGEES
CLAIM, AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED, THAT MOVE HAS POLITICAL
IMPLICATIONS.

4. COMMENT: SOMEWHAT BELATEDLY, ARABS NOW SEEM TO BE
PULLING THEMSELVES TOGETHER TO FIGHT UNRWA MOVE FOR SOME
OF SAME REASONS EMBASSY OPPOSED MOVE (REF B). ADCOMM
MEETING MAY OFFER OPPORTUNITY TO GAUGE WHETHER OPPOSITION
TO MOVE REALLY SERIOUS OR MERELY ANOTHER KARATE CHOP IN
THE PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING MATCH. EMBASSY BELIEVES WE
SHOULD CONSIDER REITERATING OPPOSITION TO MOVE IN ADCOMM
(SEPTEL TO FOLLOW).SUDDARTH
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